

Please follow the Countryside Code

To help us all respect, protect and enjoy our countryside please:

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Follow paths

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs



www.naturalengland.org.uk

Countryside guide



Experience the
countryside and
wildlife that Reigate and Banstead
has to offer

Introduction

Reigate and Banstead has an exciting and rich ecological heritage which our countryside rangers work with the community and wildlife groups to maintain and protect. From ancient woodland through to chalk grassland, we have it all.

These sites provide a valuable wildlife habitat for an array of rare and endangered wildlife; they are also wonderful places to visit.

This guide shares some of the areas in the borough that offer opportunities to enjoy stunning scenery and rare wildlife. The pages include details about how to access each site and what you are likely to find. The postcodes given are indicative only and for general guidance.

Symbols

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---|---------------|
|  | Wheelchair friendly |  | Mammals |
|  | Bats |  | Butterflies |
|  | Trees |  | Amphibians |
|  | Plant life (flora) |  | Reptiles |
|  | Birds |  | Invertebrates |



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Are you interested in learning more about our beautiful countryside?

There's lots of ways to get involved



Join our Facebook group:
Countryside - Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.
 Upload your images and ask our countryside rangers questions.



Follow us on Twitter
 @reigatebanstead



Share your pictures on the Council's Flickr page:
www.flickr.com/reigate-bansteadboroughcouncil



Riverside Garden Park Horley

Postcode: RH6 7LN

The Riverside Garden Park is a surprising find, sandwiched between the residential streets of Horley and Gatwick Airport. It is part of two longer walks, a Millennium Trail (18 miles) and the Horley Circular Walk (5.8 miles). Sussex Wildlife Trust is involved in managing the park.

Although it is not expansive, visitors will enjoy the mature trees, tranquil pond and pleasant scenery.

Riverside Garden Park is managed by Horley Town Council. Visit www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk for more information.



Did you know?

There's a renovated cycling track running from Horley to Gatwick that cuts through the park.

Parking facilities

Parking available just off Crescent Way.



Additional access details

Suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Geese, Ducks, Herons, Blue tit, Great tit, Black cap, Song thrush, Canada goose Coot, Moorhen, Mallard, Heron



Green alkanet, Red, campion, Wood avens, Teasel, Speedwell, Yellow flag iris, Bog bean, Water lilly



Bank vole, Wood mouse, Fox, Rabbit, Grey squirrel, Bats



Common frog, Common toad, Smooth newt, Palmate newt



Oak, Elder, Poplar, Alder, Willow, Hornbeam, Hawthorn, Gorse



Banstead Woods

Postcode: CR5 3NR

Banstead Woods, an ancient woodland spanning 250 acres, is thought to have existed as woodland continuously since the end of the last Ice Age about 12,000 years ago. It acts as a 'green lung' for local communities. This is one of the reasons why it has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Did you know?

In the 13th century much of Banstead Woods was fenced in as a deer park and a hunting lodge was built on the edge of the woods for the lords of the manor.

In 1939 the mansion and grounds became an emergency military hospital; the remainder of the woods was used by the War Department as a military camp and later a Prisoner of War camp.

Parking facilities

Parking available at Holly Lane car park.



Additional access details

Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Green woodpecker, Greater spotted woodpecker, Woodcock, Buzzard, Tawny owl, Wren, Nuthatch, Tree creeper, Hobby



Wood anemone, Bluebell, Primrose, Lesser celandine, Greater stitchwort, Dogs mercury, Wood sorrel



Hornbeam, Sessile oak, Pendunculate oak, Hazel, Ash, Field maple, Beech, Horse chestnut, larch, Yew



Speckled wood, Purple emperor, Red admiral, Peacock, Orange tip



Badger, Bats, Fox, Roe deer, Stoat, Weasel

Stagbury Downs

Postcode: CR5 3NR

Stagbury Downs is part of the North Downs which stretches from Winchester to Dover. Historically Stagbury Downs would have been grazed by sheep. The intense grazing controlled the more scrubby species and allowed rarer chalk grassland species to flourish. Sheep and cattle still graze Stagbury Downs as part of an effort to conserve this rare and special habitat.



Reigate Hill

Postcode: RH2 0HX

This stretch of the North Downs, designated as a SSSI is excellent walking country with chalk grasslands and quiet shady woods.

Sitting proud at the top of the Hill is the National Trust-owned 19th century Reigate Fort. The fort commands a historic defensive position looking out over the weald towards the South Downs.

It was one of 13 installations designed to protect London from the threat of invasion from France.

Nowadays its uses have changed and a visit to Reigate Hill will give you the opportunity to admire the breath taking views towards the lower Weald, the South Downs and on a clear day, Chanctonbury Ring.

Parking facilities

Parking available at Holly Lane car park.



Additional access details

There is some wheelchair/ motorised scooter access (gates widened etc.)



Did you know?

The word 'Downs' is said to have evolved from "dun" - an Old English word meaning hill. The word acquired the sense of 'elevated rolling grassland' around the 14th century, similar to our own associations today when we talk about chalk downland or even just Stagbury Downs.

Parking facilities

Parking available at Wray Lane car park.



Additional access details

Some access for visitors with limited mobility is possible.



Did you know?

In 1945 a World War II American Flying Fortress aeroplane plunged into the side of Reigate Hill killing all nine of its crew. A memorial bench was installed in March 2002.

Look out for:



Skylark, Kestrel, Buzzard, Siskin, Linnet, Yellowhammer, Blackcap, Little owl



Various skippers, Common blue, Orange tip, Small copper, Brimstone, Marbled white



Wild strawberry, Several orchid species, Greater stitchwort, Marjoram, Yellow rattle, St Johns wort, Red bartsia, horseshoe vetch, birdsfoot trefoil



Roe deer, Fox, Badger, Mole, Sheep, Cattle



Spindle, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Whitebeam

Look out for:



Skylark, Kestrel, Buzzard, Siskin, Linnet, Yellowhammer, Blackcap, Little owl



Primrose, Lesser celandine, Wild strawberry, Several orchid species, Greater stitchwort, Marjoram, St Johns wort



Roe deer, Fox, Badger, Mole, Sheep, Cattle



Spindle, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Whitebeam



Various skippers, Common blue, Orange tip, Small copper, Brimstone, Marbled white

Reigate Heath

Postcode: RH2 8Q

Reigate Heath is a testament to the history of Reigate. It is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and a Local Nature Reserve because of its rare lowland heath and acid grassland habitats.

It also has historical importance with seven Bronze Age burial mounds (3-5000 years old) which have been designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments. It is also home to a grade II listed windmill, now restored and used as a chapel. It is thought to be the only windmill in the world which is a consecrated church.



Banstead Wildlife Field

Postcode: SM7 2AH

A two-acre site with chalk grassland, a pond with dipping platform and a sensory garden. It has been developed as an environmental education site.

Fully accessible for wheelchair and buggy users, everyone can enjoy it. Banstead Wildlife Field is a small hidden gem for those who enjoy birdsong, butterflies and learning about wildlife.



Did you know?

Over 80% of our lowland heaths have been destroyed since the 19th century. Heathland is one of our most threatened habitats; lack of traditional management methods has caused heathland habitats to become more threatened than rainforests.

Parking facilities

Parking available on Flanchford Road, Reigate.



Additional access details

Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Did you know?

Banstead Wildlife Field is a "set-aside" as a haven for urban wildlife. Animals which have adapted to the urban environment tend to be more tolerant of the light and noise generated by human activity and take advantage of the heat and the abundant food sources.

Parking facilities

Limited roadside parking available.



Additional access details

Suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Green woodpecker, Greater spotted woodpecker, Stonechat, Bullfinch, Linnet, Goldfinch, Buzzard, Goldcrest, Fieldfare



Scots pine, Silver birch, Holly, Alder buckthorn, Oak



Green tiger beetle, Heath sand wasp, Heath bee fly, Shield bug, Meadow grasshopper



Small copper, Small heath, Green hairstreak, Purple hairstreak



Roe deer, Badger, Fox, Field vole



Pipistrelle, Noctule bat

Look out for:



Blackbird, Chaffinch, Crow, Collared dove, Greenfinch, Magpie, Song thrush



Fox, Rabbit, Bank vole, Field vole, Grey squirrel



Marjoram, Knapweed, Ladies bedstraw, Pyramidal orchid, Red bartsia, Oxeye daisy, Birdsfoot trefoil



Common frog, Common toad, Palmate newt



Blackthorn, Beech, Cherry, Elder, Hawthorn, Juniper, Holly, Hazel, Birch, Rowan



Brimstone, Common blue, Gatekeeper, Meadow brown, Peacock, Red admiral, Small tortoiseshell



Damsel fly, Dragon fly, Field grasshopper, Soldier beetle, Bumble bee, Black ant, Red ant

Earlswood Common

Postcode: RH2 7QB

With accessible paths, grassy expanses, wooded areas and two large lakes, Earlswood Common is home to diverse habitats and is a local nature reserve. Traditionally, it would have been used for many things, including the grazing of livestock, for gathering wood for fuel and brick making. Nowadays the site is important for recreation. Fishing is allowed on the lower lake and the upper lake is maintained as an undisturbed and tranquil haven for wildlife.



Did you know?

Earlswood's lower lake used to have a diving platform and a paddling pool for summer swimming.

Some of Earlswoods' more hardy inhabitants made use of the lake for all year round swimming and were even known to break the ice for a refreshing winters swim!

Parking facilities

Parking available at Woodhatch Road, Reigate.



Additional access details

Suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Green woodpecker, Coot Kingfisher, Great crested grebe, Little grebe, Grey heron, Cormorant, Tufted duck, Mallard, Moorhen



Common pippistrelle, Brown long eared bat, Soprano pippistrelle, Daubentons, Serotine, Noctule



Harebell, Brome, Gorse, Wild chamomile, Purple loosestrife, Gypsywort, Lords and ladies



Oak, Silver birch, Beech, White willow, Goat willow, White poplar, Horse chestnut, Alder



Roe Deer, Badger, Fox, Rabbit



Common toad, Common frog, Palmate newt, Smooth newt

Redhill Common

Postcode: RH1 6PA

Redhill Common forms part of a large (though now fragmented) area of common land known as the Redhill and Earlswood Commons. There is ancient, semi-natural woodland, grassland, lowland heath and a pond to be enjoyed.

Traditionally sheep and cattle would have grazed on the land. Since grazing stopped woodland has taken over and some of the habitats that were lost have become very rare. In the last few years Reigate & Banstead Borough Council has restored the Top Common so that on a clear day amazing views across the Weald to the South Downs can be enjoyed.



Did you know?

In Victorian times a large area of the common was a pleasure garden and was much more formalised than it is now.

Parking facilities

Parking available at Woodhatch Road car park, Redhill.



Additional access details

Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Green woodpecker, Greater spotted woodpecker, Treecreeper, Nuthatch, Wren, Great tit, Blue tit, Long tailed tit, Coal tit



Gorse, Brome, Sedges, Tormentil, Common heather (Ling), Sheep Sorrel



Oak, Ash, Field maple, Scott's pine, Beech, Silver birch, Wild cherry



Meadow brown, Small/large white, Speckled wood, Peacock, Red admiral



Grey squirrel, Fox, Field vole

Radstock Way Open Spaces

Postcode: RH1 3N

The Radstock Way is divided into distinct sites - Furzeffield Wood, Merstham Meadows and Radstock Way open space. Merstham Meadows was cut in two when the M25 was built in the 1980s with a footbridge crossing the motorway that now links the two sites. Habitats within the area comprise of amenity grassland, woodland, wet meadow and semi-improved meadowland, its diversity means it has considerable wildlife value for birds, mammals and invertebrates alike making it an excellent location for a wildlife walk.



Felland Copse

Postcode: RH21 7QH

The copse is an excellent example of ancient semi-natural woodland coppice where woodlands were managed in rotation to ensure an ongoing supply of wood for fuel. During much of the 20th century the practice ceased, resulting in a dramatic decline in the wildlife associated with coppiced woods.

Nowadays Felland Copse is coppiced for hedge laying materials and to encourage the wildlife of the woods. Neatly lain hedges can be seen throughout the borough and it is likely that wood from Felland Copse helped to restore some of these wonderful hedgerows.

Parking facilities
On street parking available nearby.



Additional access details
Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Did you know?

There is a trail of woodland sculptures made using timber from Furzeffield Wood. Come along to explore.

Did you know?

During the construction of a turnpike road in 1817 the remains of what is thought to be a Roman villa were found within the copse. The building consisted of six apartments, with a paved atrium at its west end.

Parking facilities
Parking available at New Pond Farm off Woodhatch Road, Reigate.



Additional access details
Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Robin, Goldfinch, Chaffinch, Dunnock, Treecreeper, Kestrel, Tawny owl, Chiffchaff, Greater spotted woodpecker



Fox, Field vole, Bank vole, Rabbit, Grey squirrel, Wood mouse



Sessile Oak, Pendunculate Oak, Ash, Field maple, Holly, Hawthorn, Hazel, Blackthorn, Dog wood



Burnet moth, Marbled white, Common blue, Large/small skipper



Meadow foxtail, Lords and Ladies, Bluebell, Ragged robin, Sainfoin, Common vetch, Greater stitchwort, Creeping buttercup, Travellers joy



Soprano pipistrelle, Daubenton

Look out for:



Kestrel, Chiffchaff, Jay, Kingfisher, Greater spotted woodpecker, Sparrowhawk, Tawny owl, Blue tit, Bulfinch, Wren, Treecreeper



Wood anemone, Wood sorrel, Bluebell, Lesser celandine, Town hall clock, Dog violet, Wood speedwell, Bugle, Wood sedge, Broad buckler fern, Common figwort



Roe Deer, Badger, Fox, Wood mouse, Bank vole, Grey squirrel, Shrew



Oak, Ash, Aspen, Cherry, Hazel, Silver birch



Red admiral, Peacock, Speckled wood, Orange tip

Furzefield Copse

Postcode: RH2 7HQ

Furzefield Copse is a magnet for wildlife in an otherwise urban environment. The word 'furze' means gorse so it is likely to have once been managed as open fields dominated with gorse scrub and grassland which has evolved into woodland over time.

The northernmost path forms part of the 108 mile long Greensand Way, a chalk, clay and sandstone ridge formed around 125 million years ago. It runs from Haslemere, Surrey to Hamstreet in Kent and is a popular route for long distance walkers.



Did you know?

Furzefield wood is particularly important for its deadwood habitats found in both standing trees and on the floor. Deadwood habitats will attract all kinds of different creatures from bees, bugs, moths and butterflies to the many birds, and mammals which rely on these habitats for food and shelter.

Parking facilities

On street parking available nearby.



Additional access details

Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Green woodpecker, Greater spotted woodpecker, Blue tit, Great tit, Chaffinch, Tawny owl, Wren, Chiffchaff, Longtailed tit



Bluebells, Cow parsley, Ground ivy, Bramble, Nettle



Badger, Fox, Grey squirrel, Shrew, Bank vole



Ash, Oak, Sweet chestnut, Holm oak, Larch, Corsican pine, Whitebeam, Field maple, Hawthorn, Holly, Hazel



Millipede, Centipede, Woodlouse, Earwig, Ladybird

Priory Park

Postcode: RH2 7RL

Managed and maintained by the Council and enjoyed by many, the Park combines playgrounds, flower beds, historical features and nature conservation. Habitats include woodland, grassland, a lake, amenity grassland and nectar rich flower beds designed to support populations of pollinating insects in the borough. The diversity of habitats within the Park means there is plenty of opportunity for wildlife to flourish.



Did you know?

Priory Park is home to several champion trees including the tallest recorded Hornbeam in the country (31m) and the second tallest Ash (36m). They can be found among a collection of interesting non-native trees within the Arboretum. The Tree Trail guide can be picked up from the Pavillion.

Look out for:



Linnet, Song thrush, Starling, Kestrel, Stock dove, Cuckoo, House martin, Green woodpecker, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Willow warbler, Mute swan, Kingfisher, Little grebe, Egyptian goose



Roe deer, Badger, Fox, Field vole, Mole, Rabbit



Cuckoo wasp, Click beetle, Mining bee, Meadow grasshopper



Hornbeam, Sessile oak, Hazel, Ash, Field maple, Beech, Horse chestnut Larch, Yew



Common frog, Common toad, Palmate newt, Smooth newt



Common pippistrelle, Brown long eared bat, Soprano pippistrelle, Daubentons, Serotine, Noctule



Bluebell, Marsh Marigolds, Wood Anemone, Black knapweed, Cuckoo flower, Hedge mustard, Ransoms (wild garlic)

Parking facilities

Parking available near Bell Street.



Additional access details

Suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Petridgewood Common

Postcode: RH1 5JJ

Petridgewood Common is a large area of common land, home to an array of plants and flowers. The richness of wild flower species on this site is a direct result of its management and periodical cutting, which also provides suitable conditions for a myriad of insects and other wildlife.



Did you know?

There are seven concrete anti-tank buoys on the western edge of Petridgewood Common dating back to World War II. The tank stops were positioned in 1940 as part of a GHQ defensive line and although not in situ can still be seen acting as a poignant reminder of our vulnerability during this time.

Parking facilities

Parking available at the Cricket Club car park off Woodhatch Road, Redhill.



Additional access details

Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Robin, Dunnock, Sparrow, Wagtail, Blue tit, Great tit, Wren, Chaffinch, Blackbird, Pied wagtail, Mistle thrush



Marbled white, Large skipper, Small skipper, Red admiral, Small tortoiseshell, Comma, Meadow brown, Gatekeeper, Common blue, Brown hairstreak



Meadow grasshopper



Common spotted orchid, black knapweed, Common knapweed, Red clover, Common fleabane, Red fescue, Tormentil, Meadow vetchling, Greater bird's-foot-trefoil, Smooth tare, Meadow buttercup, Tufted vetch, Marsh thistle, Lesser stitchwort, Sneezewort



Oak, Ash, Willow, Blackthorn, Hawthorn



Hooley Meadows

Postcode: CR5 3RB

Hooley Meadows is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest because of its rare habitats. Now managed in partnership with the Downlands Countryside Management Project, the meadows have been opened up to restore the chalk habitats here.

Did you know?

The site is now being grazed by cows for conservation. Grazing is much better for wildlife than cutting with machinery and the wildlife of the area will be greatly enhanced now the cows are back.

Parking facilities

On street parking available nearby.



Additional access details

Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Yellow hammer, Blackcap, Green woodpecker, Whitethroat, Kestrel, Tawny owl



Toothwort, Common spotted Orchid, Pyramidal Orchid, Self heal, Bedstraw, Ground Ivy, Wild Parsnip, Salad Burnet, Bladder Campion, Wild Basil, Burnet Saxifrage



Badger, Fox, Field vole, Bank vole, Wood mouse, Shrew, Rabbit



Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Alder buckthorn



Slow worm, Common lizard, Brown hairstreak, Marbled white, Small skipper,



Grizzled skipper, Common blue, Orange tip

Nork Park

Postcode: Near SM7 1DF

Another borough gem, Nork Park is home to a diversity of habitats, outstanding views across London and has a fascinating history.

The house and gardens were established in 1740 by the Buckle family and sold along with surrounding parkland to Frederick Coleman of the mustard family in 1890.

Now managed by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, the chalk grassland and arboretum are being restored by the council with the help of volunteers from the Nork Park Conservation Volunteers and the Downlands Countryside Management Project.



New Pond Farm

Postcode: Near RH2 7QH

New Pond Farm is a network of wet grassland fields that were farmed until the middle of the 20th century. Since then the site has been used for public recreation and nature conservation and the result is the peaceful place that we have today.

For the last twenty years part of the site has been grazed by cattle to encourage a more diverse display of wild flowers and as a result the site has been designated a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

Parking facilities

Parking available at The Drive car park.



Additional access details

Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Did you know?

There is a trim trail running around the site created to encourage fitness in the local community. It can be used as part of a circular run or as a supervised play trail adding a little fun to a family walk.

Did you know?

A small isolation hospital was built at New Pond Farm in the early 19th century to contain diseases such as typhoid, cholera and tuberculosis. This was a time such diseases were very common and correct treatment not fully understood.

Parking facilities

Parking available.



Additional access details

Not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.



Look out for:



Sparrowhawk, Kestrel, Tree creeper, Nuthatch, Skylark, Chiffchaff, Tawny owl



Pyramidal orchid, Greater knapweed, Salad burnet, Autumn flowering crocus, Oxeye Daisy, Meadow vetchling, Cowslip, Wild teasel, Black medick



Oak, Hazel, Ash, Field maple, Beech, Horse chestnut, Larch, Yew, Wellingtonia, Cedar of Lebanon, Corsican pine, Western hemlock, Douglas fir, Ginko biloba, Tulip tree



Fox, Field vole, Bank vole, Grey squirrel, Rabbit, Bats

Look out for:



Kingfisher, Buzzard, Grey wagtail, Pied wagtail, Kestrel, Sparrow hawk, Fieldfare, Redwing, Whitethroat, Dunnock



Fleabane, Primrose, Greater stitchwort, Ladies smock, Ground ivy, Birdsfoot trefoil, Common mouse-ear, Enchanter's-nightshade



Roe deer, Badger, Fox, Grey squirrel, Rabbit, Mole, Wood mouse, Field vole



Meadow brown, Comma, Gatekeeper, Orange tip, Brimstone, Ringlet



Common pipistrelle, Brown long eared bat, Soprano pipistrelle, Daubentons bat, Serotine, Noctule